

**T**here begynneth a mery gest and  
a true howe Johan spynner  
made his testamene.



**T**he moſte ſubtyler diſcepuer.  
Whiche better vnderſtander  
The moſte craftyeſt clerke.  
Of defraude moſte experre.  
Whiche moſte piaceran of ſubtyll engyne.  
All at the laſt they coulde come to decayne.  
And dayly deſcepuer bothe ſomer and wynter  
Example of waters ſon Johſſ ſplynter  
Whiche at Delft in holonde vrrament.  
Byghthe woſſchypfully dyd make his teſtament.  
yet was he a man of ſmale reputacyon  
As ye haue herde of in any regyon.  
This Johſſ ſplynter as euery man tell can.  
Was the Rentgatherer of Delft and Sceydam.  
Of.ii. Nonres the ſoth to ſay.  
Whiche he truly ſerued man a day.  
To them he was true and diligent.  
Put to his owne auantage he neuer toke rent.  
Tyl his age was come his yowthe paſt & gone.  
For pouertye wofull was his mone.  
Full ſayne in eaſe than wolde he haue lyued  
But euery man than hym reſuſed.  
As he that is age or pouertye.  
On hym full fewe men haue petye.  
The holper nonre þ more it ought be comended.  
He that doth to them bynge is euer welcomed  
And yf he nought bynge:nought ſhal he fynde  
But had in dyldene and clene out of mynde  
Thus haue theſe.ii.nonres ſplynter diſcepuer  
Whiche nauy a day he ſore be wayled.  
That all the true ſerupce that he hath done.  
Was vterly loſt rewarde had he none



¶ Thus he sat musing alone.  
A marvelous influence into his herte come.  
He mused a crafty wyle in his mynde.  
To reward the kindness of that were so unkynde  
He serynge hym self in age and pouerpe.  
Thoughte surely to fynde a remedye.  
¶ Than thorowly to answerpe dyd he hym spe.  
¶ There to auenture some marchaunte to bye  
He made hym redy and chyce wence.  
¶ If ye oz. vi. crownes he had of payment  
¶ There wythall a stronge chest he bought.  
¶ With.iii. sure lockes theron well wrought.  
¶ Than dyde he bye the same day.  
¶ Seuen hundred councers therin to lay.  
¶ & came agayne to Scedam with gode entent  
As welcome to them as the fyrst day of lent.  
¶ Whiche befoze had ben woꝛshypfully receyued  
¶ They gaue hym to drynke so wete bere vnseyned  
¶ At hym the nunnys had great eupe.  
¶ Fast to his bed they bad hym hye.  
¶ He sayde madaymes lacy and margarete.  
¶ Drynge me a candell longe and great.  
¶ I haue brought fro antwerpe a certayne thyng  
¶ Wherof this nyght I must make rekenyng  
¶ They brought hym a candell that was nat small  
¶ And syt hym in the chamber ther wythal.  
¶ Than opened he his cofer in hast.  
¶ And on table the councers cast.  
¶ Ther to tell and reken fast he began.  
¶ And loked and combled then lyke abesyn man  
¶ He sayde fyr hūdyꝛd gyltynges rounde.  
¶ Maketh euen an hundred pounde.

And other threty ren the gyltynges lay I here  
That maketh iust. v. li. of rekenyng clare.  
Herbe neuer man of suche a wple in no boke.  
In at an hole a Jun dyd loke  
She sawe this money and herde the sounde.  
Than ran she to the abbesss rounde.  
Madame come to splencers chamber with me  
What monay he hath there may ye se.  
The abbes in at the hole dyd loke.  
And sawe howe he his bagges shoke.  
And lyghely into his cofre them cast.  
As yf no man therof had wylt.  
And put out his caudell and to bed went.  
The abbesss knewe full lytell what he ment.  
Ely on the moynynge he rose & wolde be gone.  
The nūes ccreted mayster rēthgatherer echone  
& prayed hym to byde & he shuld haue gode chere  
He shulde nat lake ale wyne nor bere.  
They prayed hym to abyde ponge and olde.  
But at delf he was brought vp & thyder he wolde  
For there he was noysshed of ponge.  
And theder he wolde his lyfe to prolonge.  
So delft he wolde: and prayed the abbesss.  
Surely to kepe his chest with rycheesse.  
And charged hys wyth full strapty.  
But the key with hym kept he.  
Whan the abbesss of Delft this herde.  
By the nūes of scedā that went thyder warde  
That Iohn splynter was so ryche in dede.  
They made hym gode chere i hope of theyr mede  
Oerte was the stypse byt wene them cwayne  
In whiche of these. ii. abbayes he shold remayne



They of Delfe sayde they had most ryght.  
To haue Johſſ ſplynter if they myght  
For there was he noyſſhed in dede.  
They ſent for the cofer in greace ſpede  
At Delfe Johſſ ſplynter dwelled do wtiles.  
The abbette had & kept his cheſt wth ryches  
So there he dwelled many a yere.  
Bothe erly and late they made hym gode chere.  
They gaue hym rayment of the beſt.  
And all in truſt to haue his cheſt.  
Nowe late vs ſpeke of his teſtament.  
Hys executours were ryght ſuſtynent.  
And of habyltye and ſubſtance.  
And it had ben for a kynges ſynaunce.  
But in heuen be he crowned on hys.  
That a dyſcepuer dyſcepueth ryght wſely.  
Maſter mathewe notary & in lawe lycenſyd  
To be one of his executours hath vndertake.  
Wth other two abbottes wth gode entent.  
Theſe were executours of ſplynters teſtament  
Byt wene theſe. ii. abbayes ths rycheſſe to deuyde  
Eche of them bothe a key dyd prouyde.  
So that whan his beſpals were done.  
Ths money ſhulde be broughe forth the ryght ſone  
And byt wene theſe. ii. abbanes egally deuyded  
As reſon wolde thus they hym aduysed.  
Than came deſth that taketh all.  
Olde and yonge great and ſmall.  
And toke from Johſſ ſplynter his lyfe truly.  
Whiche was beſpied full rychely.  
Wth Dirige and ſeruyce accorpyng  
Wth torches & blacke gownes therto belongyng

Whan the obsequyes and dirige was done.  
His executors assembled toght sone.  
A woſchypful dyner they caused to be made  
Than eche of them to other sayde.  
It is best oꝝ we this money deuyde.  
To sende foꝝ the prouoste of Haghe here besyde  
Oꝝ we vnlOCKe oꝝ meddyl with this chest  
foꝝ fere of charge that they myght to vs cast.  
They sent foꝝ hym: and now he is he come.  
A blacke gowne he hoped to haue wonne  
The cofer was sent foꝝ by and by.  
The keyes were brought thyder all thre.  
Whan they began to open this chest.  
The on durst nat the other trust.  
foꝝ they snatched foꝝ the monye there.  
Lyke a tyll the that out of the water were.  
But they great ioy and couetous desyre.  
Was lyghly coured as ye shall here.  
They sat to gyder vpon on syde.  
A crosse ouer the chest they made that tyde.  
In noie patris et filii et spūs sancti  
That sayde mayster mathe we notary.  
Than answered the prouost.  
Amen: with a mery Jest:  
Than into the chest his hande he hent.  
Than spake the notary with euill entent.  
Holde out thy hande I tell the this.  
Sub pena maloris excoꝛmunicacionis  
A purs they had bothe great and wyde  
And cast this money on the table that tyde.  
The Notary had his speccacles on.  
Here is a gode sygh of golde by saynt Johñ.



The prouost was a man dyd vnderstande.  
 And of this golde he toke in his hande.  
 He sayde this golde is of suche excellence.  
 I ma may bye an hundred ppees for thye pens  
 They blessed them all that there dyd stande.  
 They sawe neuer suche a maruayle in holande  
 And specyally of me that were so wyse & subtyll  
 They looked eche on other and kepte them styll  
 A rebuke to them it was, I was.  
 As yf they had kepte shepe all theyr dayes  
 It was to them a great rebuke no dout.  
 To thynke yf suche a man shulde bypge about  
 As Johan splynter to haue so great ryches.  
 Of this whyle they were full wo doutles.  
 Than by other eche other wolde compell.  
 This to kepte in counsel and no forthet to tell.  
 The prouost sayd so mot I the.  
 That shall ye neuer make me.  
 For it is worthy in cronycles to be done.  
 Nowe herken to my conclusyon.  
 All they that serue lordes and ladys.  
 Remember age wyll come it wyll nat mys.  
 Therfore spare and kepe money in thy purs  
 And than of gode there thou shalt nat mys.  
 & though Johan splynter this fortune had that tyde  
 A thousande other may go besyde.  
 Or they suche a wyle myght fynde.  
 Nowe god euer is manns scende.  
 Graunt hym the blyss of heuen to haue.  
 That a couetous man can dysceyue.

¶     ¶     ¶     ¶     ¶  
**E**xPLICIT testamentum  
 Johannis splinter.



**T** Emprynted at London In Doules chyrch parde By  
 my Julya Notary dwellinge at the sygne of p.iii kynges.





Bp  
grs.